

Academically supported social work for the development of handicraft skills ?case study: the Pitangapor?Project

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Abstract: The Pitangapor?Project involves the establishment of production teams comprising apprentices from by low-income families with physically and/or mentally handicapped children living in the poorer areas of Belo Horizonte, Brazil, and the planning and development of income-generating activities. The initial idea was to foster family ties with a special focus on handicapped children and the families?broader integration with the community, based on principles of independence, self-confidence and belonging. This is achieved through the manufacture and sale of handicrafts. Financed by the Ministry of Social Assistance, this is an inter-institutional project of integrated actions in product planning, management of productive processes and the establishment of optimal methods to encourage the continuity of the work of the apprentices themselves. This article describes the introduction of Product Design principles into the project, as elements to foster the consolidation of the apprentice production teams.

Keywords: handicrafts, product, market

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